

PHOENIX
WELLNESS

HEALTH COACHING

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Week 1 Meal Prep Guide
6-Week Holiday Health Warrior Challenge

Phoenix Wellness

30-Day No Excuses Challenge

Meal Prep Guide – Week 1

Hi! And welcome to the 6-Week Holiday Health Warrior Challenge. I'm so excited that you've decided to drop your excuses and take on this fitness and nutrition challenge. It's only 6-weeks. And when it's over, hopefully you'll find that you'll continue along with the healthy habits you've created during this time. So, let's get to it! First, I'll explain how the Meal Prep Guides are set up, and then we'll get to the delicious recipes.

For each Meal Prep Guide throughout the next six weeks, I'll highlight a healthy breakfast, two main meals, two side dishes, and a snack. The goal here is to start making healthier choices, little by little, without feeling overwhelmed. When you're overwhelmed, you may feel like the path to getting healthier is just too daunting, and you're more likely to fall back into old, bad habits. It's not always easy, but once you see and feel the benefits of consistently nourishing your body with healthy foods, it'll be easier to continue.

Making healthier choices doesn't require throwing out all of the junk in your cupboards immediately (although you're certainly welcome to!). All it requires is making small changes. And before you know it, those small changes compounded on each other will add up to huge gains and health benefits. You'll have more energy, clearer skin, sleep better, and you'll most likely lose some weight.

One way to make sure you're ready for the hectic week that usually lies ahead is to prepare some meals ahead of time. It's easy enough to do, but it will require you to carve out an hour or two from your busy schedule. I can promise you that the benefits are worth it, though! Once you get into the habit of food prepping, you'll be lost if you skip a week. I know from personal experience that when I have healthy food ready to go, I eat better. When I haven't prepared for the week, I reach for the first thing that will only take a few minutes to heat up (usually a processed something that is high in fat and calories because I'm so hungry and just want to eat NOW), and I typically overeat. Maybe you can relate...

Remember, this challenge is about ***sticking to your healthy routines during the holiday season***. When we make the time to exercise and eat well, we feel better. When we feel better, we're in a better mood, more positive, happier, and we're more patient with those around us. Plus, when we make goals and ***don't make excuses*** for letting them slip, we actually see results. And THAT is the ultimate motivator. So take this opportunity to create some new, healthy habits and to ***stay on track during the busiest time of year***.

How to use this Meal Prep Guide:

- Choose **one** or **two** recipes (or all of them) that you'd like to try out – even having one thing prepped will save you time, and you'll have at least one healthy thing on hand for when you get hungry!
- Make sure you have all the ingredients.
- PLAN a time that you will prep the meals. Write it in your calendar if you need to!
- Portion the foods in individual containers so that they're ready to grab and go. Even portioning snacks ahead of time helps you keep track of how much you're eating, as well as makes it easy to grab them when you're in a rush.
- If you don't like a particular ingredient, swap it out for something else. The recipes I use are very versatile so that you can make them to your liking. **Ask if you need help with any substitutions!** (Really, I'm not just saying that. I'd love to help.)

- Each week, decide which recipes you'll make before you go shopping. It saves on time and money when you know exactly what you need to get and have a plan of attack for the grocery store. You also won't waste money on perishable items that you probably won't use.
- If you have extra greens, freeze them! You won't waste them, and they'll be ready for the blender.

And now, what you've all been waiting for...the recipes!

- **Apple Cinnamon Breakfast Bake**
- **Mediterranean Quinoa Salad**
- **Loaded Taco Soup**
- **Kale Salad**
- **Spicy Jicama Strips**
- **Homemade Applesauce**

Breakfast

You don't like eggs? No worries! I've got you covered. This Apple Cinnamon Breakfast Bake does the trick. Apples? Cinnamon? Grain-free?!? Yum. This is such a great breakfast (or snack) to switch things up in the morning. You can eat it cold or warm it up in the microwave. Healthy in-season apples, nuts, and some delicious spices make this a wonderful fall treat. I promise you won't be disappointed.

**You can add in more (or less) apples if you like.

**I used almonds, walnuts and cashews because that's what I happened to have.

**You don't have almond milk, you say? No prob! Use regular milk or any other milk you have in the fridge.

**If you like lots of cinnamon or apple pie spice, add more in.

**Apple pie spice recipe (In case you don't have it in your pantry): 4tsp. ground cinnamon + 2 tsp. nutmeg + 1 tsp. ground cardamom)

Apple Cinnamon Breakfast Bake (Adapted from the "Paleo Running Momma" blog)

Ingredients:

- 3 large apples (or 4 small ones), cut into small chunks
- 1 ½ c. raw nuts of choice
- 1/3 c. unsweetened coconut flakes (or unsweetened *shredded* coconut)
- 1 c. unsweetened almond milk
- 1 ½ tbsp. coconut oil, melted
- 1 egg
- ½ c. raisins, dried cherries, or dried cranberries
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 tbsp. apple pie spice
- 1 tsp. cinnamon



Directions:

1. Optional first step: Heat the oven to 350 degrees F. Spread the nuts on a baking sheet and drizzle the coconut oil over them. Roast for 5-7 minutes, remove from oven and cool long enough to handle.
2. Turn the oven up to 375 degrees F. In a food processor, pulse the nuts and coconut until a crumbly mixture forms – don't process too long or a nut butter will start to form.
3. Transfer mixture to a bowl and stir in the apples, almond milk, coconut oil, egg, dried fruit, apple pie spice, cinnamon, and salt.
4. Once combined, transfer to a 9x9 baking dish.
5. Bake in the preheated oven for 35-40 minutes. You'll know it's done when the top is crisp and starts to brown.
6. Serve warm with toppings like sliced bananas, melted nut butter, extra cinnamon or a *little* maple syrup.

Main Meal #1

This is a knock-off of one of my favorite salads at the local coffee shop. It's vegetarian (although you can add shredded chicken, if you'd like), full of protein (thanks to the lentils, quinoa, and garbanzos), has a lot of veggies in it, and is just plain ol' delicious. It's a great meal to prep so that you have healthy lunches or dinners for the week.

Mediterranean Quinoa Salad

Ingredients:

- 1 c. *uncooked* quinoa
- 1 ½ c. water
- ½ c. *uncooked* lentils, cooked to directions on package then drained
- 1 large tomato, seeded and diced
- 1 bunch scallions, chopped
- 1 medium red onion, diced
- 1 can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- cucumbers*
- Feta cheese*
- Lemon Vinaigrette*
- Optional: Greens, such as spinach, to serve mixture with



*I add these in right before serving.

Directions:

1. Cook lentils according to package directions, then drain.
2. Put quinoa and 1 ½ c. water in a saucepan. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook about 15 minutes – until all the water is absorbed. Stir frequently as the water begins to disappear.
3. Add all ingredients except cucumbers, Feta cheese and Lemon Vinaigrette to a large bowl and mix.
4. Add in cucumbers, Feta cheese and Lemon Vinaigrette right before serving.
5. Place atop a fresh bed of greens. Serve.

Main Meal #2

This is a great recipe for when it starts to get colder outside...kinda like it is now. It puts a delicious spin on the usual taco, but still tastes like a taco. A taco you eat with a spoon. Weird and wonderful. It's also a very hearty soup, and as Gram would say, "There's some eatin' and drinkin' in there." Anyway, the soup itself is just like a basic taco. Then, you can personalize it with whatever toppings you like. I dig guac, salsa, and lettuce on mine.

*If you don't like some of the spices listed below, just substitute for somethings else or leave it out. My husband HATES cumin with a passion and can smell/taste it a mile away, so I usually sub in garlic powder for that in any recipe. But for this one, that would be a lot of garlic (of course, I'd sub it one for one, but then I'd be oozing garlic out of my pores for days, and I'd have to quarantine myself.). Anyway, I just added a little more garlic, onion powder, and paprika. The exact amounts you substitute really don't matter, if you ask me.

Loaded Taco Soup (Adapted from the "Living Loving Paleo" blog)

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp. butter
- 1 medium red onion, diced
- 2 bell peppers, diced
- 2 lbs. ground beef
- 4 tbsp. chili powder
- 3 tbsp. cumin
- 2 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. black pepper
- 1 tsp. paprika (or smoked paprika)
- 1 tsp. onion powder
- ¼ tsp. cayenne (optional)
- (2) 4 oz. cans diced green chilis
- (2) 14 oz. cans diced tomatoes
- 4-6 c. beef broth (or more depending on how "liquidy" you like your soup)

Optional toppings:

- Lettuce
- Salsa
- Guacamole
- Cilantro
- Avocado
- Lime
- Jalapeños
- Diced onion
- Sliced black olives
- A sprinkle of cheese
- Cut up tortilla strips



Directions:

1. Melt the butter/heat the oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion and bell pepper and sauté until slightly softened, about 3-4 minutes. Add the ground beef and sauté until cooked through. Drain any fat/liquid from the pan.
2. Add the chili powder, cumin, sea salt, black pepper, paprika, garlic powder, onion powder, and cayenne to the pot. Stir well to combine.
3. Add the diced green chilies, tomatoes, and beef broth and stir.
4. Bring the soup to a gentle boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 15-20 minutes. Serve with any or all toppings listed above!

Side Dish #1

So many people hate kale. It gets a good rap and a bad one. It's suuuuper hearty and earthy (read: tastes a little like dirt), but it also has a lot of great nutrients and fiber in it. Once upon a time, I was on the fence about kale. Then I tried this recipe, and I was hooked. The warm dressing breaks down the hearty kale, and the balsamic and garlic tastes amazing. Give this one a try...it's been known to convert quite a few kale-haters. (I'm living proof.)

Kale Salad

Ingredients:

- 1 large bunch Kale destemmed and chopped up (Or you can a bag of chopped kale from your local grocery store)
- 1/3 cup oil
- 3 cloves garlic (or more if you really like garlic), minced
- 1/3 cup balsamic vinegar for 1 bunch (Or your favorite vinegar. I used a mix of balsamic and red wine vinegar)

Optional:

- Grated parmesan cheese



Directions:

1. De-stem and cut up kale into bite sized pieces and put in a large bowl.
2. In a saucepan, heat olive oil on medium-low heat.
3. When heated (after just a few minutes), put in chopped/minced garlic.
4. When the garlic starts to brown - this will happen quickly - remove from heat and pour in the vinegar. The mixture may bubble and "smoke", but just stir it with a spatula or spoon and pour over the kale. Mix it up.
5. If you want, you can grate a very small amount of Parmesan cheese over the salad. Enjoy!

Side Dish #2

Jicama. (Pronounced: HHH-ca-ma.) It's a Mexican root vegetable that's low in sodium and high in fiber. Its flesh is a cross between a potato and an apple, and it's really good. You can use these "strings" to top burgers or salads, or you can eat them like me...with my fingers. They're addicting. If you don't like the spice, add some others...why not? Experiment. That's what being in the kitchen is all about.

**Now in all seriousness, you could use potatoes for this, but why not try something that you maybe haven't had before? Trust me, it's worth it.

Spicy Jicama Strings or Strips

Ingredients:

- 1 large jicama, peeled, and cut into thin strips OR spiralized with the #3 blade
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- Salt
- 1 tbsp. onion powder
- 2 tsp. cayenne pepper
- 2 tsp. chili powder



Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 415 degrees F. Add jicama to a large bowl. Drizzle with olive oil and toss well to coat.
2. Add salt, onion powder, cayenne and chili powder to the jicama and toss again. Spread in an even layer on two baking sheets.
3. Bake for 15 minutes, then flip and bake another 10-15 minutes, or until the jicama reaches your desired crispiness. (These will not be super crispy like Fronions. They've got a little crunch, through.)

Snack/Dessert

A few years ago, my aunt was making applesauce. I was intrigued. "You're making your own applesauce?!? Wow! Can you teach me?" My aunt looked at me like I was an idiot and said, "Sure, you peel all the apples." I did it, no questions asked because I wanted to figure out this secret and amazing recipe. Once I peeled and cut them, my aunt showed me how she makes it. Yep, I had been duped. Talk about easy. Goodness gracious. She laughed, and now I make this every year during apple season.

I was talking with a couple of friends recently, too, about making applesauce from the apples we picked at the orchard. They said that they would make it but didn't know how. I told them, and their responses were the same: "That's it?" Oh, yeah. And it's delicious. This one's a keeper folks.

**And if you haven't noticed, I'm not super stringent on sticking to quantities in recipes. I say 3 lbs. of apples, but use what you have. It's not an exact science. If you like super thick applesauce, use less water. If you like thinner, use more. You can always add water as it's cooking.

**As for the cinnamon: I usually don't add it to the pot. Some days I feel like plain and other days I feel like a little cinnamon. So, on the days I feel like cinnamon, I just add a little to my bowl and stir it up. Voila! Cinnamon applesauce.

Applesauce

Ingredients:

- 3 lbs. (or more) of your favorite apple, or a mix (I used some Empire and Jona Gold)
- Water

Optional:

- Cinnamon, to taste



Directions:

1. Peel, core, and cut apples into chunks.
2. Put apples in a stockpot.
3. Add in a small amount of water to the bottom of the pot (maybe 3-4 cups to start). The apples will release their liquid, so that'll be more liquid that you'll have too, so really...don't go crazy on the water at first.
4. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Stir occasionally until sauce starts to form. If you like chunky applesauce, stir until there is sauce and some chunks left. If you don't keep stirring until there aren't any chunks.
5. Add cinnamon, to taste, if using.

Store cooled applesauce in the fridge. It can be eaten cold or heated up depending on how you're feeling.